



Food and Drinks

At Zeeba Nursery, we are committed to provide our children with healthy, balanced and nutritious meals, snacks and drinks. Mealtimes are a social time, giving the practitioners the opportunities to encourage children to make healthy choices in relation to food and learn about healthy eating and healthy practices. Children will be given time to eat at their own pace and not rushed.

Before a child is admitted to our nurseries, we will obtain information about any special dietary requirements, parent preferences based on religious / cultural belief, food allergies that the child has and any special health requirement. Any information / changes from parents / carers to a child's dietary needs will be recorded in writing and acted upon.

We will display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all kitchen staff and practitioners are fully informed about them.

Zeeba Nursery will provide an alternative if a child has a food allergy. Parents are welcomed to bring in their own food in a named package / container if they prefer using different products (such as organic food).

We will show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies and not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of her / his diet or allergy.

Our meals are served at the following times (approximate times depending on the nursery):

1. Breakfast is served from 8am
2. Rolling snack from 9:30 am
3. Lunch from 11:15am
4. Rolling snack after sleep time
5. Tea from 15:30pm

Fresh drinking water will be available and accessible at all times in the child's individual water bottles / sippy cups provided by the parents / carers. Babies are frequently offered water throughout the day.

OUR FOOD

- Our food is cooked fresh daily on our premises by our qualified cook.
- Zeeba Nurseries use reliable suppliers for the food they purchase.
- All our nurseries have suitable facilities and equipment for the hygienic preparation of food, including suitable sterilisation equipment for babies' food (see our bottle feeding procedure)
- We do not add sugar or salt to food.
- We avoid using large quantities of fat and artificial additives, preservatives and colouring.
- We take care not to provide food containing nuts or nut products



- The menus are designed to ensure that children receive the 4 food groups every day in accordance with the daily dietary intakes of the Eat Better, Start Better programme.
- We ensure that great care is taken to present meals, where the food is cut into small pieces, enabling your child to eat enjoyably and safely.
- No child is ever left alone when eating / drinking to minimise the risk of choking.
- Quantities offered will take account of the ages of the children as per the Eat Better, Start Better guidelines.
- The Nursery participates in the Cool Milk program. Children are provided full fat / semi skimmed milk to drink every day according to the Eat Better, Start Better guidelines and following the parents / carers preferences.
- Parents / carers will be provided with a daily feedback of their child's feeding routine (in their communication book or verbal feedback).

STAFF QUALIFICATION AND TRAINING

- Our cooks have relevant cooking experience and catering qualifications
- They understand the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as it applies to nurseries. This is set out in Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011). The basis for this is risk assessment of the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food to prevent growth of bacteria and food contamination
- The 'Safer Food Better Business' published by the Food standards Agency is followed in all our sites. We are annually inspected by the local authorities' enforcement officers to make sure that the food safety and legal requirements are maintained at all times. Any actions and recommendations are followed up and our rating is displayed in our individual nurseries
- All staff responsible for preparing and handling food hold a valid Food Hygiene certificate
- Any members of staff/volunteer/student who do not have a valid Food hygiene certificate will not be serving food to the children

FUSSY AND CHALLENGING EATERS

Most children will go through a stage where they either refuse to eat at all or become fussy eaters. Although this is quite common, it can be an upsetting and worrying time for parents when it happens. Zeeba Nurseries support children that are fussy or challenging eaters. The nursery team will guide the parents/carers and together will draw up an action plan to support the child individual needs.

Please note that if a child does not finish their meal, they must still be offered a dessert. Children who refuse to eat at mealtime will be offered food later in the day.

Staff will encourage them to eat but children will never be forced to finish their meal.

Guidelines to support parents on fussy eaters are available in Appendix A.



OUR MENUS

Draft menus are prepared by the Manager, cook and staff in the nursery. Final menus are carefully planned, and audited by the Manager. Once the new menus have been drawn up, an audit takes place and the final menus are shared with parents. If needed, we change the menus according to the input from parents, before we do a month's trial of the menu. Children can try all the meals on the menus so we can see where we need to make changes to ensure all children enjoy the meals. We have separate winter and summer menus with a vegetarian option on a 2 to 4 weeks rota depending on the nursery. The menus are displayed for parents and children to view.

BREASTFEEDING

Zeeba Nurseries believes that breastfeeding is the healthiest way for a woman to feed her baby and recognises the important health benefits known to exist for both the mother and her child. We will offer support and information to enable mother to make a fully informed choice, to enable them to breastfeed exclusively for six months, and then as part of their infant's diet to the end of the first year and beyond.

- When your baby starts nursery, we can arrange that you can breastfeed before or after work.
- We accept expressed breast milk so that your key person can feed your baby while you are at work.
- Or you can combine breastfeeding and formula milk feeding to fit around hours.
- For the preparing of expressed milk feed, please refer to our bottle feeding policy and procedure policy.

FORMULA MILK

Zeeba Nurseries do **not** provide formula milk. When formula is brought in from home, it must be in the original, sealed container, clearly showing ingredients and use by date. The container must be then clearly labelled with the child's full name and date opened and used as per the manufacturer instructions (please refer to our bottle feeding policy and procedure).

SOLID FOODS AND WEANING

Zeeba Nurseries support all children weaning from breast milk or formula milk.

- We will begin to introduce solids when the parents / carers advise us to and we ask parents / carers to inform the child's key person of any changes to their baby's diet.
- The manager will advise parents / carers of the food available at the nursery, based on our menus, in order for the parents / carers to introduce these first at home.
- It is the parents / carers responsibility to inform and update the key person of any food that the baby must not be given.
- The Key Person is advised on the consistency of the food to be given to the baby and the methods of weaning used at home.
- The Key Person or Buddy Key Person will stay with babies when they are feeding and will remain observant providing encouragement and support.
- The Key Person or Buddy Key Person will record information on the child's feeding and discuss this daily with parents / carers.

CELEBRATIONS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS



It is important that children are given the opportunity to celebrate special occasions and cultural events. Traditionally, food and drink are often used to mark these occasions. It is important to think about celebrating these events in different ways to reduce the amount of high fat, sugar and salt foods children eat at these times and to take into consideration children's allergies and diet requirements. Therefore, parents are encouraged to bring in healthier food or non-food items for birthdays and other celebrations.

If a parent wishes to bring in traditional food such as a Birthday cake for the children's to eat at nursery, we can only allow food that is shop bought, with a full list of ingredients which the Room Leader and key practitioners will take full responsibility in checking as some children may have special dietary requirements and many not be able to eat them. If a homemade cake is brought, each parent will be given a slice to take back home at pick up time.

EDUCATION

We recognise the importance of educating children from a young age about healthy eating and self-care practices to enable them to make healthy choices for themselves.

Meals and snack times help children to develop independence through making choices, serving food and drink and feeding themselves.

Through practical activities and play, we give children the opportunities to practice these skills: role play, use of real food in the home corner, opportunities to bake and to use different ingredients to produce a meal or a snack. When children take part in cooking activities, they:

- are supervised at all times;
- understand the importance of hand-washing and simple hygiene rules;
- are kept away from hot surfaces and hot water; and
- do not have unsupervised access to electrical equipment, such as blenders etc.

Children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen.

For the older children, extending their learning to include self-serving, helping to set up the table, discussing the origins of the food served, clearing away.

We will encourage children to use utensils that are appropriate for their age and stage of development and that take into account their eating practices at home.

It is acceptable to use food for messy play, when it does not represent an actual food (i.e. cornflour, flour for play dough) or when there is an educational purpose and / or sensory exploration (i.e. threading pasta for fine motor skills, lentils / rice for shakers, uncooked / cooked pasta for different textures). Food for messy play should always be under adult supervision.

ORAL HEALTH

Zeeba Nursery actively encourages healthy practices and will support children in brushing their teeth every day after lunch time. Parents are requested to provide a named toothbrush and toothpaste.

STAFF

Staff are encouraged to act as a role model during meal times. They are encouraged to share a small portion of the food provided by Zeeba, but should not have their own lunch during the children's meal.



Staff can keep their own cold drink in the classroom (water, juice), preferably in a name bottle and always out of reach of children.

No fizzy drinks or hot drinks in the rooms.

FOOD POISONING

OFSTED must be notified of any food poisoning affecting two or more children care for on the premises. Notification must be made as soon as is reasonable practicable, but in any event within 14 days of the incident.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

Safer Food, Better Business (Food Standards Agency 2011)

CONTACT

Ofsted Notification	enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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Appendix A: Guidelines to Parents on fussy eaters

We also follow below guidelines to support children with fussy eating habits:

- Don't force them to eat – this will only make them anxious at mealtimes
- Ignore your child's bad behaviour. If they have a tantrum, don't rise to it; never show that you're upset and stay calm
- Given a choice of foods each mealtime and let your child choose which one they would like, i.e. cornflakes or Weetabix. If your child refuses to choose one, leave them alone until they have made their mind up
- Introduce different foods – this will help them to know what they like and what they don't and can encourage a healthy, balanced diet
- Children are more likely to try food if it looks attractive; arrange food so it looks like a face or something children will recognise
- Draw up a star chart. Give your child a star for each meal they have eaten; once they have reached four or five stars, let them choose a non-food reward (these rewards can be inexpensive)
- Don't give large portions – a full plate can be daunting for young children
- Limit mealtime to 30 minutes, after this time has elapsed remove their plate
- Give praise after each meal, even if they haven't eaten everything. This will encourage them to make a big effort next time
- Make mealtimes fun – have picnics, meals out, invite friends round for dinner etc.